



Literary Speculum.

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ON THE POETICAL WRITINGS OF Wordsworth.

OF all our great living poets, Wordsworth, perhaps, is least read; and if he is little read, he is less understood. For even in the select circle, where the *Excursion* and the *White Doe* are quoted and admired, the animating principle of his poetry is unfelt, and its real merit unappreciated. On instituting an examination of the writings of Wordsworth, we find much puerility and more dullness; we are frequently disgusted by affectations of babyish simplicity, and repelled by the cold prosing tone of the philosopher, where we expect the inspirations of fancy and the genial warmth of feeling. But these defects are amply redeemed in the better portion of his works, over which genius sheds a steady yet lambent light, and where deep unassuming pathos unlocks the fountains of our hearts, and bids the frozen tide of our affection flow forth unrestrained. Wordsworth may want the intense power and energy of Byron; he may be equally deficient in the elegant sportiveness of imagination which distinguishes the poetry of Moore; in beauty of description, and force of illustration, Scott has far surpassed him; and there is an enthusiasm about the early productions of Southey's

muse, which gives them an airiness and attraction, not to be found in his. Wordsworth, however, has excellencies peculiarly his own, and they are abundantly sufficient to give an immortal verdure to the laurels acquired by his genius. Slowly but surely he has gained a place in the very first rank of those great spirits, whose extraordinary talents render the age illustrious : and though, in the cant of criticism, he may be now exalted to the third heaven of fame, and now debased below the veriest bardling that impis his puny wings in its grosser atmosphere ; equally unmoved by extravagant praise and ridiculous censure, he holds on his way rejoicing in the strength of intellect. In turning over his poems we shall laugh at much that is absurd, common-place and vulgar, especially as the author pretends to plume himself on his unadornedness of style ; but shall we not have frequent occasion to admire and pay that noblest of tributes to the minstrel's art, tears ? Yes, when we smile at the history of the Leech-gatherer, and other maudlin effusions of the same class, the subjects of which are as improper in serious poetry, as a dunghill and a brood of pigs would be in epic painting, we shall remember that we owe the *Excursion* to the same hand, while we yield up our affections to the dominion of the enchanter, without a single murmur of reluctance or disapprobation.

The chief characteristic of Wordsworth's poetry, is an intense love of nature,—of nature in her beauty and repose rather than in earthquakes and storms, and this feeling, perpetually present and active, betrays him into a pettiness of expression and a colloquial familiarity of phrase, infinitely below the dignity and power of his genius. But this passionate regard for the inanimate loveliness of creation, this eager perception “of the glory in the grass, the freshness in the flower,” imparts an indescribable charm to all his writings, a fascination and sometimes a sublimity, which awes and enchants us by turns. While we drink in the unsophisticated breathings of the bard's heart, and grow intimate with his unaffectedly frank spirit, which, with an amiable egotism, he lays open to our contemplation, we feel that we are admitted to a confidence with him, who is the inspired prophet of nature, for whom hill and stream and wilderness have an audible voice, and to whom all the secrets of the mute world are communicated. When he touches his harp, we listen as if to hear the songs of the Dryads and the Nymphs ; the spirits of the ancient woods speak from his pages ; and the sedge-crowned powers of the silently flowing

rivulets, breathe mysterious accents of the future destinies of man, in his simply melodious numbers. How finely are these predominant feelings depicted in the following lines! how majestic, yet unadorned, is the strain of melancholy music, in which he descants on his early predilections!

"For nature then
To me was all in all. I cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colours and their forms, were then to me
An appetite, a feeling, and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm."

LYRICAL BALLADS.

In the preface to the Lyrical Ballads, productions which abound with glaring defects and exquisite beauties, deeply pathetic traits of character, intense passion and elegant description, mixed up with much that is mean, uncouth, and absurd, we find the following passage, which, perhaps, may be considered an excuse for most of the author's faults. "I am sensible that my associations must have sometimes been particular instead of general, and that consequently giving to things a false importance, sometimes from diseased impulses, I may have written upon unworthy subjects." The subjoined passage will exemplify the poverty in expression of which Wordsworth is too often guilty:

"A mariner
Who from a sea-fight had been brought to Falmouth
And there was lying in an hospital."

It would be idle to multiply quotations merely tending to prove what is sufficiently obvious to the most careless reader; but in the verses "To a Sexton," a subject, which, it might be supposed, would awaken solemn ideas in every bosom, is rendered utterly ridiculous from the manner of treating it.

"Let thy wheel-barrow alone,
Wherefore, Sexton, piling still
In thy bone-house bone on bone?"

* * * * *
"Mark the spot to which I point;
From this platform, eight feet square,
Take not even a finger joint;
Andrew's whole fire-side is there."

We must not, however, be too fastidious, while considering compositions, which from their very nature are incapable of those lighter graces and embellishments, which form a principal feature in the productions of writers, who have chosen themes more refined and more remote from common life. We must remember, while perusing the Lyrical Ballads, that they are the effusions of one, who has said,

“ ’Tis my delight, alone in summer shade
To pipe a simple song to thinking hearts.”

And though we deeply regret the many palpable errors into which he has fallen, detracting, as they necessarily must, from his merits as a poet, let us forget them, while we enjoy the delightful task of pointing out some of their innumerable beauties. The *Female Vagrant* is a very repulsive title, but it is affixed to a poem of uncommon excellence, the story is told simply yet forcibly, and the ear is seldom shocked by that harshness of metre which abounds elsewhere. The commencement is beautiful, particularly the stanza which describes the garden of her father's cottage.

“ Can I forget what charms did once adorn
My garden, stored with pease, and mint, and thyme,
And rose and lily for the Sabbath morn ?
The Sabbath bells and their delightful chime ;
The gambols and wild freaks at shearing time ;
My hen's rich nest thro' long grass scarce espied ;
The cowslip-gath'ring at May's dewy prime,
The swans, that when I sought the water side,
From far to meet me came, spreading their snowy pride ?”

One more quotation, and we will leave this piece—it is above praise.

“ Can I forget that miserable hour,
When from the last hill-top, my sire survey'd,
Peering above the trees, the simple tower,
That on his marriage day sweet music made ?
Till then he hoped his bones might there be laid,
Close by my mother in their native bowers :
Bidding me trust in God, he stood and prayed,—
I could not pray :—through tears that fell in showers,
Glimmer'd our dear-loved home, alas ! no longer ours !”

An intimate knowledge of man and his strangely varying affections is evinced in these volumes, the almost unconscious thoughts and delights of infancy are brought to our eyes, the fondest, wildest hopes of youth are depicted in the lively colours of imagination, the sober feelings of manhood are embodied, and old age, looking alternately towards heaven, and on the half opened grave, trembles before us in all its pathetic helplessness. How delightful is the re-joined recollection of youth.

“ My sister Emmeline,
A little prattler among men,
The blessing of my later years,
Was with me when a boy;
She gave me eyes, she gave me ears,
And humble cares—and delicate fears;
A heart, the fountain of sweet tears;
And love, and thought, and joy.”

And while we duly appreciate the faithful delineations of the heart and its mysteries, of those evanescent coruscations of intellect, which gleam over the mind and are extinguished, and of that tender mingling of thought, passing rapidly from one train of ideas to another, without connection, without end, and without aim; what “dull insensible” can remain unmoved by the touching pathos, the profound sympathy with nature, the affecting moral alchemy, which occurs in every page? For instance, who can read the lines below, and not feel the ice of indifference melted away from the source of those ennobling passions, which “lie too deep for tears.”

“ LINES WRITTEN WHEN SAILING IN A BOAT AT EVENING.

How rich the wave, in front impress
With evening twilight's summer hues,
While, facing thus the crimson west,
The boat her silent path pursues!
And see how dark the backward stream!
A little moment past, so smiling!
And still, perhaps, with faithless gleam,
Some other loiterer beguiling.
Such views the youthful bard allure,
But heedless of the following gloom,
He deems their colours shall endure
Till peace go with him to the tomb.

And let him nurse his fond deceit,
 And what if he must die in sorrow?
 Who would not cherish dreams so sweet,
 Tho' grief and pain may come to-morrow?"

Moore's Lyrics are justly the subjects of high praise, many of them appear unique in their kind, and seem to leave competition at an immeasurable distance. Yet if we are impartially alive to his real excellencies, we shall find among the poems of Wordsworth compositions which lose nothing in a comparison with the melodies of our British Anacreon. The delicacy, the graceful simplicity of diction, the ethereal sweetness of harmony, which fill us with a delicious languor, and make us the willing thralls of genius, exist as perfectly in the Lyrical Ballads as in *Lalla Rookh*. In that beautiful romance, there is a constant flow of voluptuous melody, an unbroken succession of magnificent imagery, odours and flowers, a cloudless sky, and an earth carpeted with sweets; spirits that breathe in an atmosphere of beauty, and beings "more exquisite still," live in the warm light of fancy, till we are weary of admiring. Wordsworth is less profuse of his mental riches; he shines brightly and effectively, but he neither dazzles nor overpowers; he awakens our interest, by a faithful description of things common in the every day world, equally unstudious of dignified language and sonorous versification. We neither admire nor animadvert, till, when it is least looked for, some natural burst of passion or pathos overcomes us unawares, and irresistibly excites our sympathies; and surely this is the noblest triumph of the poet, for it is the subject, not the writer, that elicits our feelings.

The *Excursion* will disappoint those who read merely for amusement. The calm tone of philosophy, and the even tenor of pure unexaggerated thought, will have few charms for the ear which has been spoiled by the ranting heroics of modern poetry, or the mind whose natural perceptions of grace and beauty have been deadened or destroyed, by the ambitious sublimity approximating to bombast, and the superhuman phantasies assimilating to absurdity. Those who luxuriate over made dishes, to form which, all the skill of gastronomy has been exhausted, turn in disgust from the simple food with which an unsophisticated appetite is satisfied. And the reader, that delights in a volume where all is showy, and the muse appears in a holiday suit, can scarcely be pleased with an undisguised transcript of genuine feeling, or relish a composi-

tion, the sole end and aim of which is truth. But where taste has not been refined into fastidiousness, where the mind is open to receive the impulses which accord best with its intellectual dignity, and where the heart is keenly alive to those perceptions which its most exalted desires prompt, the gentle unobtrusive harmony, the unostentatious grandeur of Wordsworth in his *Excursion*, will be acknowledged with reverence and admiration. We read that astonishing work, with the same indescribable awe and hushedness of spirit, with which we gaze on a Gothic Cathedral,—York Minster for instance. The long vaulted aisles, the fretted architraves, replete with niches, whence the statues of saints and angels look peace and tranquility; the stained glass windows, through which the sun beams, deprived of their painful glare, stream on the mosaic pavement, refreshing and soul-soothing as the light of a new world; and the half obliterated monuments of the dead, imparting an awful consciousness of our own mortality, wean us, at least for a little while, from vanity and time, to ponder on the higher and more ennobling interests of eternity. And thus, to find similitude in dissimilitude; when the moral teacher, who, embodies his aspirations after truth and virtue, in the language of the muse, expatiates on the symetry and loveliness of nature; on the greatness and goodness of the Creator; on the lofty destinies of man; on life, death and immortality; we kindle with the theme, appreciate all the raptures of the bard's heart, and forget for a moment our present existence, in glorious anticipations of the future.

The *Excursion* is but a portion of a much larger work; the author would have waited for the completion of the whole, ere he presented it to the public, but he remembered that,

“Life is insecure,
And hope full oft fallacious as a dream.”

The subjoined extract will give some idea of the poet's plan.

“Of truth, of grandeur, beauty, love, and hope—
And melancholy fear subdued by faith;
Of blessed consolations in distress,
Of moral strength, and intellectual power,
Of joy in wildest commonalty spread;
Of the individual mind, that keeps her own

Inviolate retirement, subject there
 To conscience only and the law supreme
 Of that intelligence which governs all,
 I sing :—"fit audience let me find though few."

What can be more exquisite in description or more deeply pathetic than the next extract—let those who denounce the *Excursion*, as a mere collection of elaborate common places, peruse it, and blush if prejudice will permit them.

"The good die first,
 And they whose hearts are dry as summer dust
 Burn to the socket. Many a passenger
 Hath blessed poor Margaret for her gentle looks,
 When she upheld the cool refreshment drawn
 From that forsaken spring; and no one came,
 But he was welcome; no one went away,
 But that it seemed she loved him. She is dead,
 The light extinguished of her lonely hut,
 The hut itself abandoned to decay,
 And she forgotten in the quiet grave."

Notwithstanding, however, the sublimity, beauty, and pathos with which the *Excursion* abounds, it is not probable that it will ever become a popular work: its form is uninviting, its better parts are unconnected; they want the charm of interest to unite them in one harmonious whole—separately considered they are faultless, but taken together the impression produced is unsatisfactory.

The *White Doe of Rylstone* is destitute of that distinctness of incident and character which is absolutely necessary in narrative poems; there is little or nothing to keep alive the attention in this work, the first pages leave us in no doubt as to the catastrophe, and there is no veil to remove, no circumstances to elucidate, no excitement to curiosity. The story, too, such as it is, is told in a vague, rambling manner, far from calculated to hide the deficiency of interest. The hapless Nortons are brought before us, dim and half defined as the shadowy characters of a dream; even Emily, the sainted Emily, is an untangible abstraction, for which we can feel but little sympathy, rather than a being of flesh and blood, whose joys and sorrows are like our own. On these accounts principally, the *White Doe* has failed to obtain the praise, which

its great beauties seem to deserve. For excellence of composition in detached portions of the work, cannot supply the absence of that animating spirit, which in the poetry of Byron and Scott exercises so decided a mastery over our feelings. It would be unjust, however, to omit some of the redeeming traits of this production, which would be valuable, had it no other attractions than the following passages:

" From Bolton's old monastic tower
The bells rang loud with gladsome power,
The sun is bright, the fields are gay
With people in their best array.
Of stole and doublet, hood and scarf,
Along the banks of the crystal wharf,
Through the vale retired and lowly,
Trooping to that summons holy.

What would they there? Full fifty years
That sumptuous pile, with all its peers,
Too harshly hath been doomed to taste
The bitterness of wrong and waste.
Its courts are ravaged, but the tower
Is standing with a voice of power;
That ancient voice which wont to call
To mass, or some high festival,
And in the shattered fabric's heart
Remaineth one protected part,
A rural chapel, neatly drest,
In covert like a little nest,
And thither young and old repair,
This Sabbath day, for praise and prayer.

A moment ends the fervent din,
And all is hushed, without, within;
The only voice which you can hear
Is the river murmuring near.
When soft!—the dusky trees between
And down the path through the open green,
Where is no living thing to be seen;
And through yon gate way, where is found,

Beneath the arch with ivy bound,
 Free entrance to the church-yard ground,
 And right across the verdant sod
 Towards the very House of God,
 Comes gliding in with lovely gleam,
 Comes gliding in serene and slow,
 Soft and silent as a dream,
 A solitary doe!
 White she is as a lily of June,
 And beauteous as the silver moon,
 When out of sight the clouds are driven,
 And she is left alone in heaven ;
 Or like a ship some gentle day
 In sunshine sailing far away,
 A glittering ship, that hath the plain
 Of ocean for her own domain."

Peter Bell, and the Waggoner, belong to that class of poems, which depend for effect on those minor feelings and affections of our nature, which, though separately considered, are of little consequence, yet taken in the aggregate frequently decide the most important events of our lives. It is in this species of composition that Wordsworth is most successful, for he rather wins than commands, and his mild contemplative genius excites our love and delight, rather than our admiration and awe. The Waggoner is uniformly beautiful, the most rigid critic must feel disarmed while perusing it, and his admonitory voice will scarcely be heard, unless to quarrel with the subject. Peter Bell, is a strange mixture of faults and excellencies. It was a novel attempt in poetry, to ennoble that despised, persecuted beast, the ass ; and the hero himself has but little to qualify him to fill the principal place in a sentimental poem. Much, however, has been effected with these unpromising materials ; and the author has shewn, that there is nothing so low or mean, as to be incapable of receiving beauty and interest under the magic touch of intellect.

" Long have I lov'd what I behold,

Thenight that calms, the day that cheers

The common growth of mother earth

Suffices me, her tears, her mirth,

Her humblest mirth and tears.

The dragon's wing, the magic ring,
I shall not covet for my dower,
If I along that lonely way
With sympathetic heart may stray
And with a soul of power.

.....
A potent wand doth sorrow wild;
What spell so strong as guilty fear?
Repentance is a tender sprite,
If aught on earth have heavenly might,
'Tis lodg'd within her silent tear.

.....
But more than all, his heart is stung
To think of one almost a child;
A sweet and playful Highland girl;
As light and beauteous as a squirr'l,
As beauteous and as wild.

A lonely house her dwelling was,
A cottage in a healthy dell;
And she put on her gown of green,
And left her mother at sixteen,
And followed Peter Bell.

A mother's hope is her's—but soon
She droop'd and pin'd like one forlorn;—
From Scripture she a name did borrow;
Benoni, or the child of sorrow,
She call'd her babe unborn.

For she had learn'd how Peter liv'd
And took it in most grievous part,
She to the very bone was worn,
And, ere that little child was born,
Died of a broken heart.

The River Duddon is a collection of exquisitely finished sonnets; indeed Wordsworth has no rival in this department of his art, and had he given us nothing but this one beautiful volume, our posterity would have remembered him with gratitude. I have

thus borne my testimony to the merits of this great writer, and I have felt both pleasure and pride in the task; pleasure in acknowledging his high talents, and pride because he is my countryman.

In conclusion I would remark, that while many poets of the day are only popular from accidental causes, and enjoy a fame purely ephemeral, Wordsworth having quaffed of the well-spring of immortality, and deriving his inspirations from causes which must continue to operate through all time, will be more fairly estimated by posterity than by his contemporaries, and will behold (if disembodied spirits are conscious of posthumous applause) future generations, as they gather in the harvest of genius, surrounding the sheaves of his glory, with imperishable laurels!

H.

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The Editor is desirous of offering a few observations on the difference so apparent between the above remarks on the writings of Wordsworth, and the severe strictures which have appeared in another part of the work. In explanation of this, he begs his readers to observe, that the pages of the LITERARY SPECULUM are not written by one individual, nor are the Writers confined to one line of thinking. Possessing the unlimited freedom of expressing the operations of their own minds, they cannot be supposed always to entertain a congeniality of ideas. Such restraints are the shackles of genius; and while there are so few undisputed truths in the world, it must be in vain to hope on all occasions for uniformity of sentiment, and more particularly on literary subjects. The object of this Work is to elicit, not to suppress truth; and by admitting the expression of a variety of opinions, that end is most likely to be accomplished. It is however but an act of justice to the writer of the strictures alluded to, to observe, that they were dictated by no personal or malevolent feeling; and the most ardent admirer of Wordsworth must confess, that the passages quoted are sufficiently ludicrous to deserve censure. The Editor offers these remarks rather as an explanation than an apology. In a work professing to admit free discussion, apology is unnecessary. The sentiments of each person are before the reader, and it is for him to decide which is in the right.

BRIEF NOTICES OF
Eminent Authors.

BY TOBIAS OLDSCHOOL, GENTLEMAN.

ROBERTSON.

THERE are fewer examples of excellence in historical composition than in any other department of literature. This may seem singular; for what, it might be remarked, can be more easy than to give a faithful, unvarnished account of matters of fact? But, perhaps, when it is remembered how much our every-day acquaintance vary in relating the most simple circumstance, and how great an influence prejudice and passion and selfishness exercise in human affairs, we shall more justly estimate the difficulties of the historian's task. Certain it is, however, that while we have many poets, moralists, and philosophers, whose productions approximate to perfection, the whole circle of our classical authors affords but three instances of exalted genius employed on history. If we inquire which are our standard histories, the merest smatterer in literature will enumerate the works of Robertson, Gibbon, and Hume; and which of the quill-drivers, who have wasted their lives in compiling details of battles and sieges, court cabals or court amours, has any claims to be placed in juxtaposition with that illustrious triumvirate? The Laureat is delivered of his prose quarto with laudable regularity; it answers Murray's purpose, no doubt, for there are folks ready to purchase whatever he publishes—and the Quarterly Review bestows its modicum of praise, hot and hot, on each result of Mr. Southey's labours. But the commencement of the History of the Brazils will sleep quietly in the Tomb of the Capulets—before the conclusion appears. And if the Annals of the Peninsular War are ever read by our children, it will be at the bottom of their school-going trunks. How different the fate of Robertson, who “still as the tide of ages rolls away,” will gather new honours, and ultimately rank in the grateful remembrance of the literary commonwealth, with Thucydides and Livy and Tacitus! The History of Scotland, the first claim which

Robertson put forth for the applause of his country and of mankind, is a work of astonishing research; it elucidates the transactions of a period darkened by the storms of civil war, and hitherto seen through the delusive haze of prejudice; it places things and persons, previously unknown or misunderstood, in a clear and natural point of view: and if we regret that the historian's patient and impartial inquiries should leave a cloud of guilt and shame on the memory of the unfortunate Mary Stuart, we cannot but do homage to the generosity of heart, and the manliness of feeling, that dictated the pathetic passages which record her sufferings and her fate. It is impossible to rise from a perusal of the History of Scotland without forming a very high opinion of the author, and of that keenness of intellectual vision, "looking before and after," which could glance through the dim vista of years, and clothe the shadowy phantoms of the past with all the freshness of reality. But the triumph of Robertson as a writer, and of the moderns in that branch of composition, is the History of Charles the Fifth, a work admirable in every particular, happy in its subject, and faultless in its execution. Were we to turn over the annals of the world from the creation downwards, we could find no period more splendid or interesting than that which it embraces. The day-star of knowledge had just begun to shed its beams on the "palpable obscure" of the dark ages, the soul of man was awakening from the slumber of ignorance, and shook off the chains of sloth with the strength of a giant. The chivalrous Francis swayed the sceptre of Gaul;—Spain, Germany, and the Netherlands, bowed before the ambitious Charles; Henry the Eighth, then the idol of his people, filled the regal chair of England; Leo the Tenth wore the triple crown—and Solymán the Magnificent was the priest and king of the zealous Moslems. Add to this, that printing was an art then newly invented, and assisted the awful Luther in his strife with power and prejudice—while he trampled on the time-hallowed superstitions of the world, denounced the crimes of Rome,—scoffed at its thunders, and called on its besotted slaves to free themselves from their disgraceful bondage. These were the mighty themes with which the genius of Robertson had to grapple. Did he succeed? His elaborate pages are the best answer. The classical purity of his style is unequalled in the English language, and his smooth harmoniously modulated periods have a vigour, which effectually preserves them from

flatness or insipidity. The whole of the introductory volume, a retrospective view of Europe during the middle ages, is above eulogium.—“To censure would be ridiculous, to praise is unnecessary.” The account of the rise and progress of the Reformation is perhaps the finest historical episode ever composed, and what can be more deeply interesting than the African expedition of Charles, the fatal battle of Pavia, and the subsequent captivity of Francis, or that grand picture, the abdication of the imperial hero? When were the idle fictions of romance half so affecting as these transcripts of real events? When was the voice of imagination so enchanting as the eloquence of truth? The potent spells of the historian evoke from the shades of death and oblivion the ardent spirits that flourished while the reign of chivalry still endured. The tournament, the tented field, the steel-clad combatants, the warrior kings, and all the attributes of “glorious war,” start anew into existence: we are carried back to the days of Bayard and of Bourbon; the knight, without fear and without reproach, and the intrepid rebel who expiated his guilt on the scaled walls of the Eternal City. To obtain a knowledge of general history has been called a severe study; but could we imbue the folios and quartos of dull authors with even a small portion of the beauty and energy of Robertson, it would be so no longer. It must not be supposed that our historian, in sacrificing to the graces, forgot for a moment that his readers looked to him for information rather than amusement.—No; his authority is final as to every event of which he has treated: but while he adheres to the strictest accuracy in the thread of his narration, he has embellished it with such elegance of expression, force of observation, and vividness of description, that we feel as much delight while he guides us through the realms of memory, as we could do in wandering amid the flowery mazes of the garden of fancy. In a word, while the majority of writers, employed on matters of fact, only interest us from the importance of their subject, Robertson dignifies the mean, and renders the driest detail pleasing. The History of America is a noble production, inferior perhaps to Charles the Fifth, yet abounding with excellencies of the highest order. Had it been the author's sole composition, it would have experienced a fairer estimate; it is only when placed in comparison with what he had done before, that it fails to satisfy our judgment: yet nothing can be more masterly, more boldly conceived, or more felicitously executed than the description of

the first voyage of Christopher Columbus. The Conquest of Mexico by Cortes, is beautifully wrought up, and must satisfy the most fastidious taste. The Dissertation on Ancient India is extremely curious; it is evidently the result of a laborious research, and smells of the lamp more strongly than any thing else from the same hand. The subject, however, does not awaken a lively feeling of interest, and has few charms for the general reader. The mind of Robertson was too powerful to fail in any of its efforts, and the least successful production of his pen will be treasured with jealous care, wherever the language is spoken, as one of the noblest achievements of triumphant genius, while a love of knowledge or a taste for real excellence remains among men. The purity of Robertson's style can never be too much admired—energetic without the inflation of bombast, dignified without the arrogance of egotism, harmonious and eloquent without the folly of oratorical tropes, or poetical fancies, truly English without being rude or harsh, and deeply learned without the least tincture of pedantry. We conclude our remarks by noticing a peculiarly striking feature in the writings of Robertson, which unfortunately Gibbon and Hume have not in common with him: we mean the moral tendency of the reflections with which he enriches his narrative, and the laudable feeling of reverence which evidently dictates all his observations on Christianity. His taste as an author was too good to permit him to mix up polemical dissertations with details purely historical, and his virtues as a man were too great to allow him to infect the sacred fountain of hope, peace, and immortality, with the poison of doubt and infidelity.

GIBBON.

THE History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, is a truly astonishing production; and were there nothing else to perpetuate the fame of Gibbon, it would be abundantly sufficient. Most historians have confined themselves to a comparatively small portion of time, and to a single family of events; but the daring genius of Gibbon, not content with any age or nation in particular, could not be satisfied with a more circumscribed period or space than the long series of two thousand years, and the vast theatre of the whole earth. To record in a lively and faithful manner, the transactions of one solitary epoch deserves high praise; what then must be his merit, who placed in imagination on the imperial seat

of Augustus, could calmly follow, with the eye of judgment and discrimination, the troubled waves of change and war, 'till they overwhelmed the throne of the last monarch that succeeded to the honours of Constantine? Gibbon himself tells us, that it was in the garden of a convent of Bare-foot Friars at Rome, surrounded by the ruins of the ancient city, while the vesper hymn of the Monks hallowed the silence of evening, and the shadows of twilight shed a supernatural grandeur over the remains of departed greatness, that he conceived the first idea of his history. A few brief moments were then sufficient to carry him, in imagination, through the long chain of causes and effects, which brought the nursing mother of nations from triumphing on her Seven Hills, to grovel in the dust at their base. Thirty years of his life, that portion of his existence when his amazing faculties were most active and energetic, were to elapse before the design then broached could attain completion. But at the instant, there is no doubt he felt as fully the exhilarating sense of his own wonderful powers as when, having finished the last page of his mighty work, he contemplated the glorious result of indefatigable industry, patient research, and surpassing genius. Such is the human mind; at one glance it travels through twenty centuries, and becomes acquainted, as if by intuition, with all the varieties of men. No toil is too great, no difficulty too formidable; the clouds of error, ignorance, and oblivion vanish as it advances, and the impediments thrown in the way of its conquests only tend to increase their lustre. To those who have not read Gibbon's master-piece, no praise of mine can convey an adequate idea of its excellence, and on those who are intimate with that sublime effort, panegyric would be lost, for their own judgments must have anticipated all I could say. I must remark, however, that Gibbon's style is far less pure and uniform than Robertson's. Many portions of the work, undoubtedly, are beautiful specimens of composition, but through the whole, as it appears to me, there runs a levity of phrase, an epigrammatic turn of expression, an idle attempt at wit, extremely inconsistent with the dignity of the historian and his subject. But this is mere matter of opinion. Unfortunately we have more serious charges to adduce. In the notes appended to the text, a number of scandalously indecent, and grossly immoral quotations are given; the excuse offered is, that they are left in the obscurity of a dead language. Is this satisfactory? Does not every Tyro at our academies, read Livy

and Herodotus? And does not the transparent veil thrown over the stigmatised passages, serve to quicken the curiosity of the reader? Even this might be forgiven to the author of a work, of which his country and his species have reason to be proud. But who will excuse, or even seek to palliate, the malignant eagerness with which he endeavours at every opportunity which the subject affords, to destroy our belief in the purest of all religions, and to take from us that divine hope of a future and happier state of being, without which we should feel ourselves but little superior to the beasts that perish? We would allow to every man perfect freedom of opinion, and if there be any who can look on the frightful gulph of annihilation with composure, we envy them not such a gloomy satisfaction; but when the infidel turns zealot, and seeks to propagate his comfortless doctrines, by falsehood, misrepresentation and sophistry, it is time for those who cling with the arms of faith to the ark of revelation, to come boldly forward and declare the reason of their confidence in those hallowed truths, of which not one jot or tittle shall fail, "though the earth is burnt up with fervent heat, and the heavens pass away like a scroll."

HUME.

HUME's History of England is a work too generally known and admired, to need any illustration or applause from us. Yet great as the merits of Hume unquestionably are, we feel disposed to rank him, as an historian, far below both Robertson and Gibbon. The annalist of his country will always possess a strong claim to the respect and admiration of the patriot, which the author who looks from home for his subject must want. To this cause, perhaps, much of the extreme popularity of the writer in question should be attributed. For though there are many works professing to be histories of the island of our nativity, Hume's is the only one which bears the impress of genius, and is at all worthy of its theme. Those who had previously attempted the subject, detailed the circumstances that came in their way faithfully and drily: like the newspaper historians of the present day, they were correct and dull; a battle was fought in their pages without the smallest appearance of feeling or enthusiasm; they recorded the noblest instances of heroism and self-devotion without a syllable of commendation; they shed no tears at the fall of injured excellence, they triumphed not as they wrote, that they too were Englishmen. It was reserved

for Hume to do justice to the eventful history of this land of heroes, martyrs, poets, and philosophers. To his care it was left, to collect the scattered yet inestimable gems of memory, illustrate them with the brightness of his genius, and preserve them from the silent injuries of time. His success was not doubtful; the materials for the undertaking were arranged to his hand, they needed only to be re-edified and placed in a just point of view. Difficulties there were, but they were not formidable; he subdued them without putting forth half his strength. He shook the dust from the warrior's shield, fanned into flame the expiring embers of the martyr's funeral pyre, gave a new voice to the clarion of chivalry, and inspired with the breath of life "the melancholy shades" of past renown, then about to vanish amid the glooms of forgetfulness. But while thus employed in resuscitating the dry bones of English history, he met with but few impediments, and certainly none calculated for a moment to palsy the mental vigour which he brought to the task. He had seldom to reconcile conflicting authorities; he was not often obliged to pause over moot points, and hardly ever forced to mine his course through the rubbish of fiction. The road lay defined and open before him, and if he turned aside into bye-paths, it was not from necessity but choice. Failure, therefore, was most improbable; yet, though the work was comparatively easy, he left it incomplete: as if weary of his unopposed successes, he broke off at the Revolution, and his history, like a splendid, but partially constructed edifice, remains to us a noble, but unfinished monument of human genius. All the works of Robertson are complete in themselves; nothing can be added or abstracted without injury to the whole. The plan of Gibbon's History was appallingly comprehensive, yet he toiled on, and bequeathed it to posterity, finished in all its parts. In this particular then, Hume's inferiority is evident; and as a mere composition, his England will bear no comparison with Robertson's Charles the Vth. The style, though much more chaste and consistent than Gibbon's, is infinitely below the severe simplicity and unassuming elegance of Robertson's. We wish we could close our observations here; but the pages of Hume's history are polluted with irreligious doubts and sceptical arguments, artfully introduced and likely to unsettle the minds of the unwary. We must, therefore, beg the readers of Hume to remember, that that powerful writer, not content with broaching his opinions in his philosophical works, stooped to the

poor trick of mixing them up with his historical labours, as if conscious that when fairly stated, they would be first despised, and then forgotten, and could only gain importance and permanency, when forced into notice by being connected with what was really valuable.

H.

The Crucifixion.

He dies—the Saviour, the incarnate God
 Bows from th' accursed tree, and renders up
 His human nature as the prey of Death;
 Of Death, who trembles while he strikes, and shrinks
 In terror from the victim of his power.
 Tremendous hour, thick darkness covers all—
 Palpable darkness—save that from the crown—
 The thorny crown that binds Emmanuel's brow,
 A fearful glory shines at intervals,
 Serving to shew such sights as once again
 Shall fright the sinner's eye—what time from heav'n
 The Son of Man amidst the clouds appears,
 And calls the world to judgment. Lo! the graves
 Resign their sleepers, earthquakes heave the ground,
 Pale spectres rise, and damned spirits howl,
 Anticipating their eternal doom—
 The marble tombs like monuments of snow
 Melt into air, the wormy beds beneath
 Yawn wide, and each sends forth a ghostly shape
 To stalk in the broad streets of Salem, where
 The terror-struck inhabitants are seen
 Smote with the tongueless, voiceless agony,
 Which losing hope, takes refuge in despair.
 Hark! shall the everlasting mountains fall,
 Or do the god-built pillars that sustain
 This world of beauty, life, and intellect,

Totter in ruin? Hark! again a sound,
Loud as the echo of the thunderbolts
That drove the rebel angels down to hell,
Breaks on my ear, astounding as the blast
Of that last trumpet which shall wake the dead!
It shakes—the temple shakes;—the sacred veil,
Which hid the Mercy Seat, whereon of old
Jehovah sat, between the Cherubim,
Is rent, dishonor'd like a thing profane.
Oh, horror! see the stars shoot from their spheres,
The planets are arrested in their course,
Their brightness dwindled to as pale a flame,
As that which plays round an expiring lamp,
The sun is dark, the moon is turn'd to blood:—
Ye men of Judah, whither can ye fly?
Where hide ye from the arrows of his wrath,
Whose frown convulses nature, and o'erwhelms
The wonderful creations of his power?
It must be so—the last, last day is come:
Time is no more—Eternity begins—
Fall on your knees devoted Israelites,
And deprecate the anger of your judge,
Whose vengeance is as a two-edged sword:
Vain prayers—Lost, lost—the sentence is gone forth,
An earthquake to the centre heaves the ground,
And the blue arrowy lightning flashes fierce,
While desolation in the thunder speaks.
The firmament is like a shrivell'd scroll,
The cloud-encompass'd hills dissolve like wax,
The mighty of the nations, princes, kings,
And warriors strong in battle, are grown weak
As infants at the breast. Oh, Galilean,
Thou that wert despis'd—cast off—rejected—
Meek sufferer, man of sorrows, that didst bear
Thy trials from the cradle to the grave,
With the mild majesty of fortitude,
How are thy awful prophecies confirmed!
This was indeed a present deity,
The son of Mary was the son of God.

On English Taste.

I AM inclined to think there is some truth in the assertion of foreigners, that, the English, as a nation, are destitute of taste. This is an humiliating confession; and I am so far from expecting an unqualified assent to its correctness, that I can well anticipate the triumphant reply of those who would adduce the excellence to which our country has given birth, as the best proof of its falsehood. They will run over the catalogue of British genius, and pity the obliquity of mind which could conceive such an opinion. They will cite names, which time has consecrated as the most distinguished in science, literature, and the arts; and yet, without plucking a leaf from the laurels of native talent, I will still maintain my original position, that, as a nation we are deficient in taste. Genius is independent of country: it may spring up any where. A Shakespeare may be born in Russia, or a Raphael in America. Spirits, embued with an enthusiastic love of the "*ingenuas artes*," have arisen in situations and under circumstances most ungenial. But this only evinces that talent is not peculiar to soil, and is no argument in favor of national taste. The mere production of genius is no proof of its estimation.

Natural temperament, and national pursuits and manners, have a powerful influence. A people engaged in active and laborious occupations, and whose souls (as Leigh Hunt expresses it) are absorbed in "a world of brick and mortar and money-getting," can neither appreciate the value of mind, nor be sensible of the thousand exquisite springs which set that mind in motion. The admiration of intellectual excellence is incompatible with a spirit of selfishness; and that such a spirit is the very *primum mobile* of commerce and trafficking, cannot be denied. Who would look for literary taste in the man who is constantly poring over a ledger? or expect the sordid considerations of pounds, shillings and pence, to exist in the same bosom with the love of the arts?

It is for these reasons that the English are not a nation of taste. they may be a philosophic, a thinking people; but there is too much coldness, too much matter-of-fact feeling about the national character, for it to be susceptible of that ethereal principle, which animates the bosom of an admirer of genius. Let me however be understood

as speaking in general terms. Individual instances are by no means rare of an ardent enthusiasm in the cause ; and if we were to judge from the mass of literary aliment, constantly disgorged by the press, it would seem that a thirst for knowledge, and the cultivation of letters was rapidly gaining ground. But even this, when analysed, will amount to nothing ; for it is worthy of remark, that of those who read, the greater part are governed in their choice by the advice of a few ; by those critical arbiters of public opinion, who direct its current through the medium of reviews ; and if we add, what is an undoubted fact,—that by far the greater number who purchase books are those who do so from ostentation, without the most distant intention of reading them,—who give a general order to their bookseller for all new works, merely to fill up the empty shelves of their library, we shall find the number of those who read from an intuitive relish diminish to a very brief amount. Thus, though intellectual excellence may spring up in any country, and though an attachment to letters and the arts may partially exist even in a nation of buyers and sellers, it by no means follows that such solitary instances can confer on it a reputation for taste : they would be only honourable exceptions to its general character ; and till we have more unequivocal proofs of a general and marked predilection, we must be contented to withdraw our pretensions.

It is related of the Florentines, (and the same sentiment exists with various shades of difference, all over the continent,)—that they hold the statues of antiquity in such veneration, as scarcely to allow them to be profaned by a touch. The Medicean Venus and the Apollo Belvidere are literally worshipped. But where do we find the most distant approaches to such a feeling of enthusiasm among our phlegmatic countrymen ? It is true we do not possess such exquisite productions of art ; but does the same spirit exist even in a degree ? Is it not notorious that we would rather mutilate than preserve ; and that for this reason our statues (such as they are) are inclosed by railings to defend them from the fingers of mischief ? It may be said that these are the wanton acts of children ; and this may be partly true ; but the delicate fancy of perpetuating initials and autographs at the expense of sculptural beauty, is to be attributed in a great measure to “ children of a larger growth ;” and even if it were not so, it at least shows a lamentable misdirection of the juvenile mind on the part of the parents, in not having impressed it with a respect for the productions of art. The statues erected

in the public market-places on the continent, being protected by the reverence of the people, are less liable to injury than ours, which are defended by ballustrades within the sacred walls of abbeys and cathedrals! Exhibitions of art in France (except where they are private property) are thrown open to the public without reserve; the national taste is a sufficient guarantee for this confidence; and they are resorted to as a source of instructive amusement, without the liberty being in the slightest degree abused. Were such a latitude allowed here;—were the rooms of the British Museum submitted to the unlicensed freedom of the multitude, without at least a formal control, or the Royal Academy paintings exhibited gratuitously, I am convinced that the projectors of such a scheme would soon repent their liberality.

Athletic sports, gross and vulgar amusements, and whatever tends to brutalize the feelings, must blunt the perception to the excellence of those works of skill, whether in literature, sculpture or painting, which a mind highly imaginative could alone have produced; and for a predilection for such barbarous pursuits, the English are distinguished above every other country in Europe. As a nation they have little relish for intellectual enjoyments. All their pleasures are sensual. They cannot assemble even for a charitable purpose, without a public dinner. Meetings of Bible Societies, and of subscribers to hospitals and dispensaries, are held at taverns, and the appeal to the heart is made through the medium of the appetite. If we descend to the multitude, the proofs are innumerable; and it is the very nature of their occupations, that they should be solely influenced by animal sensations. What room is there for mental improvement in the drudging occupation of an English mechanic? It is the fashion of this plodding country to chain the workman to his employment, from twelve to sixteen hours out of the twenty-four. We carry the principle of industry to such an excess, that we leave no opportunity for relaxation; no leisure to unbend from the toils of labour. His life is one unvaried series of hardships, the time not immediately devoted to work being merely occupied in meals and sleep, which are absolutely necessary to enable him to prosecute his calling. It is painful to see a man's whole life devoted to obtaining the means of existence, and to reflect that the best portion of it is fading away beneath the rigorous subjection of corporeal slavery! It is for this reason that the general character of the English nation is so destitute of intellectu-

ality. The same principle of drudgery includes all who are engaged in manufacturing or commercial pursuits ; it extends from the artisan in his workshop, to the merchant in his 'counting-house ; with this difference, that in the former it is the offspring of necessity ; while in the latter, it arises from that sordid, plodding spirit of accumulation, which gathers "increase of appetite by what it feeds on." Thus, in both cases, they are each obliged to compress their enjoyments within a small compass, and make the most of them ; and while the one solaces himself with the pleasures of the table and the bottle, the other, by a less expensive but more speedy inebriation, purchases a momentary oblivion of all his cares ; so that between severe labour and the indulgence of animal appetites, their reasoning faculties are stupified, and they are blind to the productions of genius. This will ever be the case in countries where the *summum bonum* is placed in excessive application to laborious pursuits. The Dutch are proverbial for their want of taste. I believe, that even in the present enlightened state of Europe, no bookseller in Holland will undertake to publish a work at his own risk : he must not only be indemnified from all loss by the author, but a certain profit ensured to him ; and their painters would have starved, if instead of devoting their talents to the immortalising *beers' revels* and drinking bouts, they had aspired to the higher objects of the graphic art. Their deplorable taste in theatrical affairs is no less conspicuous. The poet dares not leave any thing to the imagination ; all his conceits must be embodied, and presented to the audience in *propria forma* ; hence their dramas are a tissue of all that is monstrous and absurd ; and taste is sacrificed to ignorance.

In France, a difference of manners has produced a different result. The artisan has finished his labour by five or six in the afternoon. The rest of the day is his own ; and there are numerous public enjoyments in which he can participate gratuitously. If his mind has a philosophical bias, there are museums, into which he is admitted, free of expense, and where he may hold his communion with nature uninterrupted. Is he a botanist ? There is the garden of plants. And if he merely seeks pleasure for its own sake, the *Thulleries*, the *Palais Royal*, and the *Boulevards* present him with an unceasing variety. By these means his taste becomes gradually cultivated and refined ; he learns to admire and appreciate the monuments of art with which he is surrounded ; and insensibly

acquires a gusto, which the phlegmatic Englishman can never attain. His manners too have none of that asperity which clings to the English character. The Frenchman is perpetually mixing with his fellows; and he obtains a smoothness by a frequent collision with congenial minds; perhaps there may be little sincerity in all this, but it is at least very agreeable; and when placed in opposition to our frigid reserve and repulsive bluntness, loses nothing by the comparison. I have no wish to detract from the solid worth or sterling good qualities of my countrymen; I am fully sensible of their merits; but I have no hesitation in expressing my utter disrespect for that cold, freezing, suspicious closeness of disposition by which we are characterized. A stranger shall sit in a coach with four or five other persons for an hour, without one of them having the good manners to open his mouth, or offer a pinch of snuff. They eye one another with much the same symptoms of distrust as if each suspected his neighbour of being a pickpocket.

To return from this digression. It may be said that what the French artisan gains in time he loses in substantial enjoyment; and that in this respect the advantage is in favor of the Englishman; all which may be thus translated: the English mechanic spends the whole of his life in labour, but he is rewarded for it by good eating and drinking. He works hard, but he is well fed; and he has the glorious privilege of inebriation. The Frenchman, on the other hand, has none of these desirable advantages. His labour is light, and his food is light; but then he is exempted from the miseries of excessive labour, and the nervous sufferings arising from the unrestrained indulgence in animal enjoyments. He gains but little, it is true; but then he wants but little. His desires are comprised in a small compass; and they are easily gratified. His head is clear, and his heart is merry; and to all this we may add, he is a ten times happier being. To apply the argument to the object in view, I contend that the English are less alive to matters of taste than the French, from the difference of their pursuits and amusements. A plodding, laborious, money-getting spirit must be inimical to the arts.

I am even inclined to think that we resort to places of theatrical amusement, rather from a want of excitement, than an intuitive taste. It affords a relief to the monotony of our occupations, and diverts the *ennui* of our natural temperament. I am confirmed in this opinion by the fact, that the best written plays are

comparatively the least successful. Lord Byron tells us in one of his prefaces, that he was assured by Mr. Thomas Dibdin, when he was stage manager of Drury Lane Theatre, that the *School for Scandal* (decidedly the finest comedy in the English language) had always been found the least profitable to a theatre; and the proprietors of dramatic establishments have experienced to their cost that audiences are only to be enticed by "inexplicable dumbshew," and gaudy spectacle. But the strongest proof of the depraved taste of the British public at the present period, is to be found in the unparalleled and certainly undeserved success of that medley of bad writing, bad puns, and vulgarity, "*Life in London*." This has indeed been the touchstone of public taste. A work, indifferently executed, but which administers largely to the bad passions of the high and low vulgar, has been exalted into a consequence, which simple merit could never have attained. The finest writing of which the language is susceptible would have sunk into comparative obscurity. It certainly seems a paradox that an age, which professes to admire and appreciate the talent of a Byron, and does homage to the inventive genius of the Scottish novelist, should stoop to make a meal on such refuse; but I cannot participate in the astonishment this contradiction is calculated to excite. I believe the admiration for fine writing has rather been feigned than felt; that it is at least an individual and not a general feeling. "*Life in London*" is esteemed, not for its literary merit,—for it has none,—but because it assimilates with the gross sentiments of the vulgar, (a class of beings not peculiar to one rank in society); and details with practical minuteness all the depravities of a vicious metropolis. It owes, however, the greatest portion of its celebrity to its having been adapted to the stage by the proprietors of the Adelphi Theatre; and Blackwood's Magazine, playing the part of Puff to this execrable production, don't scruple a lie or two in stating the extent of its popularity. Such conduct becomes the crusher of genius and the immolator of Keats. It is pretty certain, however, that the Adelphi folks have reaped a plentiful harvest; and no less than three other theatres have started forward for a share in the gleanings. They will no doubt have good pickings. The million is a monster that delights to fatten on garbage.

But the corruptness of English taste is not merely shewn in its patronage of what is worthless: it is equally conspicuous in its

neglect of what is valuable. How many have been ruined by relying on public discernment!* We are not deficient in talent; but can talent exist without encouragement? As a proof of the abundance of the *materiel*, it is admitted that we excel in those arts which are most patronized. For instance, we are considered (I believe) at the present moment, the best portrait painters in Europe. The reason is obvious. The purse-proud fool, who would not give five guineas for the finest production of the pencil, will not grudge a hundred for the resemblance of his own ugly physiognomy, or those of his wife and children; and our painters attain comparative perfection in this branch of art, because they are well paid for it;—because it is made worth their while to devote the best portion of their time to its acquirement. It is ridiculous to talk of British patronage, when our artists are forced to exhibit their paintings—the labour of years—at a shilling a head; and look for recompense to the curiosity of that mass of idlers, who gape at every novelty that presents itself, merely for the sake of killing time. Compare this with the homage paid to the genius of the Italian painters. They were patronized by popes and princes, and were enabled from the munificence with which they were rewarded, to produce those *chefs d'œuvre* of art, which are the admiration of the world. It is related of Guido, that he received permission to be covered in the presence of the Pope (Paul V.) and that he had the boldness to say, that had that liberty not been granted to him he would have taken it. The life of Benvenuto Cellini (written by himself) displays in striking colours the arrogance of an artist who felt the value of his own powers, and who was conscious they would command estimation; in an age, too, as little favorable to civil and political liberty as can well be imagined. He was always complaining of injustice; but though he tells his own story, it is easy to perceive that the injustice was principally on his own side. He was twice banished for the outrages into which he had been led by the violence of his temper. He stabbed a man in the street; insulted bishops and nobles; and in all these fracas, his genius

* The fate of Dr. Thornton's Botanical Works and Tomkins's splendid production of the "British Picture Gallery," and the "Paintings of the old Masters," is a striking proof of the truth of the above remarks. After in vain appealing to a taste which did not exist, they were both compelled to throw themselves on the liberality of parliament, and seek, in the almost equally hazardous experiment of a lottery, for that remuneration, which they sought in vain from the appreciation of the public.

bore him through triumphant. He was not only munificently paid for his services, but it was a matter of favour to induce him to undertake them ; and at a period when rank and opulence would scarcely have protected their possessor from the consequence of such conduct as he was guilty of, he was caressed, patronized, and admired. If our artists were honored with comparatively moderate encouragement, there is little doubt that some of them at least would rival the excellence of the old masters. But the truth is, that the time which should be spent in improvement, is consumed in obtaining the means of existence. They cannot afford to devote themselves to a study, which promises nothing but poverty during its acquirement ; and holds out little prospect of encouragement, when the object is attained. Nor will the arts ever flourish till the national taste is changed. The plodding traffickers in bags and bales, who place their whole souls in the accumulation of money, without possessing the spirit or allowing themselves the time for its rational enjoyment ; and the senseless encouragers of pugilistic ruffians and brutal sports, are alike unqualified for patrons of those studies, whose object (as the Roman poet expresses it) is to soften the manners and improve the heart ; and it is an ungracious truth, that these two classes combine the majority of persons, whose fortunes are adequate to that encouragement which literature and the arts deserve at the hands of a nation, which in every other respect, is confessedly one of the greatest in the world.

Song.

OH ! it is not that eye, tho' it bears on its beam

The light that gives joy to my heart :

Oh ! it is not those lips, tho' inviting they seem,

That can love's purest fervour impart ;

Oh no ! Oh no !

'Tis truth in that bosom should glow.

It is not the roses that bloom on thy cheek,

That can love to my bosom convey :

Nor the smile on thy brow, tho' it fondness bespeak,

For those with thy years will decay ;

Oh no ! Oh no !

'Tis truth in thy bosom should glow.

S. R. J.

The Country Church-yard.

Beneath yon rugged elms—yon yew tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

GRAY.

THE sun was beginning to tinge with its beams the fleecy clouds of a summer morning, when, after a solitary walk of two or three miles, I entered the church-yard of Dunmow. All around me was repose and peace, for nature had not yet shaken off her nocturnal sleep, and even the bird of dawn had not yet commenced his matins. All was beauty too; the neighbouring landscape wore a dreamy twilight colouring, far more pleasing to the eye, than the broad effulgence of noon. Death itself, as beheld in the memorials of its ravages, assumed an appearance by no means terrible, for the grassy osier-bound hillock pied with daisies, and the mouldering weather-stained tomb, while it indicated the mortality of man, proved, with the same convincing eloquence, that sorrow is but for a season. There was nothing to revolt the feelings; no profane hand had scattered the ashes of the dead, affection seemed to have lavished all its endearing tenderness, in hallowing the last mournful recollections of departed excellence, and here, to use the language of Scripture, it might be said, "that the wicked ceased from troubling, and the weary were at rest."

Before me rose the venerable Gothic church "looking tranquility." The sires of the village reposed around it; many a man of God, had published the tidings of salvation from its antique pulpit, many a generation had paid its devout offerings in its hallowed aisles,—there they had married and been given in marriage, there they had been sprinkled with the water of regeneration, and there they had performed the last solemn rites for youth prematurely cut off, or old age fallen like a sheaf of corn fully ripe. The dial-plate, with its gilded hands and burnished numerals, which so often attracted the wondering yet delighted gaze of those who rest lower than the base of the building, now excites the same feeling of astonishment and pleasure, in their children's children: and the admonitory "Time flies" inscribed beneath it, still continues to warn the hasty or unreflecting peasant, that he must soon follow

his progenitors. Oh ! thou mouldering piece of architecture, raised in the wild by vanity, superstition, or piety, for the service of a God all mercy and love ; where be the hands which consolidated the stones which compose thy fabric ? Where the cunning fingers which moulded them into proportion and beauty ? The pride of wealth and the zeal of piety are alike forgotten in the dust, the architect has ceased from his labours, and the tools of the builders are heard no more. Man, poor perishable man, in the vain consciousness of his power, piles marble on marble, and raises edifice after edifice, conferring on senseless matter that perpetuity, which he cannot attain for himself, since, as the period to all his triumphs

"Earth's high station ends with ' Here he lies,'
And 'dust to dust' concludes its noblest song."

In this little realm of death, how many of the heart's best affections lie buried ! how many of the purest feelings of our nature are extinguished ! Here the ardent bosom of passion ceases to throb, and the aspiring spirit, with all its ambitious projects, is at rest. Yonder green knoll appears to cover the remains of a beloved infant, removed from a troublesome world, "ere sin could blight or sorrow fade ;" often has the verdant turf glistened with other dew than those of morning, for it has often been hallowed with a mother's tears. But she weeps no more,—she has followed the babe she lamented,—parent and child slumber together. The neatly sculptured stone at my feet, informs the passing stranger, that it covers the dust of virtue, beauty, and youth. Perhaps this is the last tribute of devoted love, the grass has withered from around the tomb,—is it because the feet of affection have so frequently pressed the sod ? "Here lies E. T." a modest inscription, yet it may indicate the last abode of a worthier man than many of its proud neighbours. It may be, that one of those exalted beings who practise all the virtues of humanity in secret, content with well doing for its own sake, reposes on this pillow of dust. It may be, that the father of "the fatherless, and him that has none to help him," the unostentatious steward of heaven's bounties, and the unfailing friend of the friendless, has closed his useful career in this narrow dwelling. May the all-knowing God, "who seeth in secret, reward him openly." But the distinguished mausoleum on the right, serves to commemorate the good deeds of the village pastor. His grateful flock, who so long reaped the blessings of his ministry, have erected the monument, that their children may revere his memory, and his successors imitate his virtues.

The greater part of the elevated green spots which mark this quiet cemetery, are the faint remembrances of the nameless dead, yet they were useful and honorable in their generation, the smile of delight welcomed them in the moment of birth, and their expiring sigh was echoed by those who mourned their loss. Poverty and wealth are equal in the grave; all the adventitious distinctions of rank end there; the peasant who broke the clod for a scanty morsel moulders in his original dust. Who is it that sleeps beside him? The lordling, that owned the land which he tilled. Trite but useful truths. Who can be proud here? I tread a soil, every atom of which once formed part of a sentient being like myself. The clods beneath me were, at no very remote period, instinct with life, and warmed with the same passions which I still continue to feel. Here the adoring lover has become dull and insensible; he feels not the touch of her delicate fingers, in whose smile he seemed to exist,—the harmony of her voice is heard no more. And beauty, what is beauty now? Oh! draw not aside the veil of mortality; disclose not the secrets of the tomb. The heart that beat tumultuously at the call of honour, how cold it has grown. Glory is an empty name, and renown the shadow of a shade. Anger, malice,—how tranquil are the breasts that were once agonised by those baleful feelings. Enemies are friends here; every cause of contention is extinguished, and the ashes of those, who trembled with rage when they met while living, mingle in these silent mansions. Avarice has abandoned the treasures on which it gloated. Vanity has doffed its rainbow-coloured plumes. Ambition has put off its blood-stained mantle. Power ceases to command; weakness is no longer despised; and piety has fallen asleep in the triumphant hope of that glorious morning, when “the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible.”

H.

The first Kiss of Love.

’Twas the calm hour of midnight, and the arm
Of my soul’s idol hung confidingly
On mine. My heart was on my tongue, and yet
I prattl’d eagerly of every theme

Save that whose anxious fraught quicken'd each pulse,
Crimson'd my check, and parch'd my fev'rish lips.
Her silence chid my levity—for I
Strove with the idle mask of merriment
To cloak the deeper feelings of my breast.
She answer'd not, and I was silent too.
We walk'd together, brooding o'er such thoughts,
Such sweet and bitter fancies, as may fill
Hearts form'd to sympathize, but doubting yet
Their mutual influence. At last,
While my breath thicken'd, and my bosom heav'd
With two conflicting passions—hope and fear—
I took her hand, which trembled in my grasp,
And shrinkingly gave back the warmth of mine.
There was no eye to look on us, save His
Who never sleeps, and His benignant smiles
Fell on us in the starlight—ears were none
Save Echo's, to drink in the sighs of Love,
Who borrow'd the soft breezes of the south,
Perfum'd with violets for his couriers.
What could I do?—I told her how I lov'd,
And she was silent, but so silent, that
The music of an angel's tongue had been
Less grateful. Oh, there is an eloquence
Wordless and voiceless, but more pow'rful far
Than aught that Tully or Demosthenes,
When Greece was free, or Rome was Rome, could boast:
The eloquence of nature, when the eye
(As did her dark eye then) speaks for the heart;
And the quick tell-tale rose blush o'er her face,
From the lips to the forehead stealing, like
Eve's sunbeams glancing o'er an Alp of snow,
Reveals the secret of a soul too pure
For mystery or feigning. All was told,
Tho' not a syllable found utterance.
Our spirits harmoniz'd—each jarring note
Of those delicate chords, the passions, died
To melody and sweetness. Heav'n forget
Me and my house in our extremest need
If I forget that moment! Oh! 'twas more

Than an eternity of plodding days
 Of worldly thoughts and feelings, cold as vain.
 There was no moon that night, but o'er our heads
 The soft blue, boundless, cloudless firmament
 Was spread, resplendent with ten thousand stars,
 And each particular star seem'd in its course
 To linger, shedding from its pure bright sphere
 An iris-colour'd halo on the brow
 Of my Eliza—Mine? Yes—ever mine.
 Again I took her unreluctant hand,
 Not now withdrawn, as once, in maiden pride,
 But yielded with the honest willingness
 Of innocence, that knew no evil thoughts;
 I press'd it to my bosom, reddened it
 With passionate caresses, and grown bold
 With the excess of happiness, dar'd snatch
 From her ripe lips, that shame the coral's hue,
 And breathe to me the airs of Paradise,
 The first extatic kiss of virtuous love.

H.

Scotiana.

BY JEREMIAH THISTLE.

No. 3.

John Bicker, the Drunken Dominie of Kilwoody.

(Concluded from page 410.)

THE church-yard of Kilwoody was situated on a rising ground,
 which seemed to have been fashioned by art for its then destination.
 It was surrounded by a wall, on the outside nearly ten feet high,
 but little more than half that height in the interior. In some places,
 where this wall had been broken down, it was repaired, like many
 of the fences in Scotland, with rough unshapen stones, whose angu-
 lar points rudely fitting together, served to give it some degree of
 solidity, without the use of mortar. We may here remark that the

barren appearance of these fences frequently impresses the English traveller, accustomed to the verdant enclosures of his own country, with an idea of sterility, by no means justly imputable to the soil.

The night was serene and mild ; but the multitude of stars, that spangled the dark blue sky, made it lighter than the two surgeons wished for. Shrouded in thick great coats and fur travelling caps, and bearing the implements for disinterring the Dominie, they soon arrived at the church-yard, where the rough protuberances of the uneven wall enabled them easily to reach the top. Having attended the funeral for the sole purpose of noting the situation of the grave, they had no difficulty in immediately commencing their labour. This was comparatively easy, as the earth still lay loose and light ; yet, ere they had arrived at the coffin, the tender skin of their hands, unaccustomed to such friction, began to convey no very pleasant sensation. They persevered, however ; and at last, had the satisfaction of hearing, by the hollow sound, that they had reached the surface of John Bicker's narrow dwelling. In a little time, they cleared its whole extent, and with their tools, wrenching open the lid of the coffin, they soon effected the resurrection of the Dominie. " Where is the bag ?" said one to the other ; and it was soon discovered that each had carelessly depended on the other for providing this necessary article. This was vexing ; for the risk of detection in the conveyance, was thereby considerably increased. However, they were forced to trust to that good fortune, which had hitherto favored their enterprise ; and placing the body carefully on the grass, at some little distance, by the side of a distinguishable tomb-stone, they began with alacrity to refill the grave with earth, and again make up the hillock, neatly covered with turf, which, to the eyes of a whole cotemporary generation, marks the peaceful resting-place of even the lowliest and the humblest of the Scottish peasantry.

While they were employed in this operation, and had nearly completed their labour, they were alarmed by the sound of a deep hollow groan. It only broke for a moment the surrounding stillness ; and indeed passed away nearly as quickly as the instant of its perception. The two surgeons, however, started up, and stared aghast at each other ; and without uttering a word, listened most attentively. Their whole souls for some minutes seemed to be in their ears ; but all was silent. " Did not that seem a groan ?" muttered M'Gruel. " Hush !" replied the other, catching hold of his

friend's hand. They again bent themselves in the attitude of listening, but all was still, the air was even calmly silent, and they again began to adjust the turf.

"It must," said Chronic, in a low tone, "have been the sighing of the wind among the tomb-stones; and yet, in my ear nothing could sound so like a groan." "Let us make what haste we can," returned his friend, "there may be other living creatures besides ourselves, even in the precincts of this church-yard."

The moment their work at the grave was completed, they both assisted in carrying the body to the wall. There, placing a rope under the arm-pits, they slid it gently down the deep exterior; and leaving it there, leaped back into the church-yard to secrete their tools in the corner of a dilapidated tomb, which, at a very remote period, had contained the bones of some favorite retainer of the ancient barons of Kilwoody. Every thing being prepared for their departure, M^r Gruel first mounted the low wall, at the spot where he had deposited the corpse of the Dominie: previous to his meditated descent on the outside, he darted his eye through the gloom below, as if measuring the extent of the leap, when suddenly uttering an exclamation of terror or surprise, he rushed back to his friend. "Gracious God!" exclaimed the amazed surgeon, "he is moving from the wall." His companion, inspired more with curiosity than alarm, looked immediately over, and to his utter astonishment, beheld John Bicker the Dominie, seated, as well as he could distinguish, at some little distance on the ground. "I must be certified," said Chronic, "that this is no delusion. Follow me," so saying, he leaped from the wall, and was immediately imitated by his companion. They ran to the spot, and without giving themselves time for reflection, grasped the Dominie in their arms. "Are you really a living man?" said M^r Gruel with great earnestness. "Where am I?" returned the Dominie in a voice so low, languid, and feeble, as marked the extreme degree of debility, to which he was reduced. "Thank God!" answered Chronic, "we have come in time to deliver you from a death, at which the imagination shudders; had we been but a few moments later, you might have suffered the short but horrid consciousness of being in the grave."

The Dominie by his action seemed unable to comprehend the meaning of their words, and appeared nearly fainting, when the two surgeons placed a bottle to his mouth, of wine which they had

brought as a cordial for themselves. The few drops he swallowed wonderfully revived him, preventing that rigour, with which he seemed to be threatened, and M'Gruel disrobed himself of his great coat, which the Dominie's new friends wrapped carefully around him. While they were about this charitable act, John Bicker, by the feeble light, perceived the habiliments of mortality with which he was clothed, and with a shuddering of horror he demanded an explanation. "There is time enough for that," replied the surgeons, "when you are more recovered. Try if you are able to walk with our support; we shall conduct you to our house, where you can obtain the quiet repose and invigorating medicines you seem so much in want of."

The Dominie felt sufficient strength to move along, leaning on the arms of the two surgeons. On their way, they gave him a full explanation of his late situation; a narrative, which he listened to with the deepest interest, intermixed with those shuddering emotions of nature, which we feel at looking back on horrid situations of danger, our deliverance from which was effectuated neither by our wisdom nor our courage, but by a fortuitous circumstance we could never again depend upon. It was at this moment that his new friends took an opportunity of setting forth to him the necessity, the importance, and the blessings of temperance. It is needless to detail to the reader what was said on the subject, but every word sunk deeply into the heart of the Dominie. With a mind naturally capable of higher pursuits, and an elevation of idea inspired by the partly classical education he had received, he now felt a loathing at the vulgar and senseless debauchery, into which the ardent sociability of his temper had seduced him. This frame of mind was no doubt strengthened by the recollection which momentarily pressed upon his imagination, of the horrid fate, which seemed to have been averted from him by a special interposition of Providence. "I will make nae solemn promises," said he, as he raised his eyes to the multitude of stars which bespangled the deep dark azure sky; "I'll make nae solemn promises to heaven, for that perhaps would be a presumptuous confiding in my own strength; but let these bonny twinkling lights bear witness, at least how I wish to become an altered man." "This to you," replied M'Gruel, "is a new starting post of existence; let every step of your future course be in the path of prudence and virtue." The Dominie seemed absorbed for a few moments in deep abstraction. He had evidently made up

his mind to some resolution which he did not then disclose; he only ended his reverie by the exclamation of "All believe me dead; and but to one I shall be dead to all."

In their way to the dwelling of the surgeons, they necessarily passed the public-house of Saunders Glass, where the Dominie had so often rioted away his substance, and so lately endangered his existence. It is hardly to be described, with what a shuddering of horror he approached the place, which was not a little increased by the sound of jovial merriment, that arose from the drunken crew within. Begging his new friends to stop for a moment, he applied his eye to a broken part of the window shutter, and beheld his former companions, with joined hands in a circle round a large bowl of punch, reeling and shouting with all the vociferation of delirious inebriety. The effect of this scene was heightened by the sable garb of mourning still worn by the party, all of them having been the preceding day at the funeral. The Dominie at this moment could not resist the opportunity afforded him, of endeavouring, however ludicrously, to effect the reformation of his former associates. Raising his well-known voice as well as his scarcely recovered strength would permit him, the surgeons having previously thundered on the window shutter with their fists to command attention, he thus addressed them: "Besotted drunkards! Is the little reason that God has given you, so pair a gift, that you find your greatest pleasure in its destruction? Winna my awfu' fate warn ye? Maun I come frae the grave to preach to you repentance?" The momentary silence which followed this address was soon interrupted by drunken Davey Gourlay, who striking his fist with great vehemence on the table, exclaimed, "May I never taste anither drap, if that binna Johnny Bicker's voice, and dead or alive, de'il may care, we'll drink thegither;" so saying, he snatched up one of the bumpers, and began staggering towards the door, and the party on the outside might have soon been detected to have been of this earth's gross substance, had they not immediately withdrawn. Drunken Davey, disappointed in finding the object of his search, staggered back again. "It was Johnny Bicker's voice I'll swear," he exclaimed; "but what the de'il did he say?" The whole company expressed their total want of recollection, all but Saunders Webster, who hiccuping as he spoke, asserted that he remembered it perfectly well, "We were a' desired" said he, "to take a warning that people of reason had the gift of getting drunk

in the grave." "The very words!" vociferated all the party; "For mind ye," added drunken Davey, "the ither world is the land of spirits, and as this is Britain, why it maun be British spirits, the very words Saunders Glass has painted aboon his door." The accuracy of Davey's logic was, without further examination, taken for granted, the party again filled their bumpers, and as far as their growing insensibility would allow, the former scene of thoughtless uproar was resumed.

The two surgeons, without further interruption, conducted the revived Dominie to their genteel, clean, and comfortable dwelling. Having supplied him cautiously with nourishment, they caused a bed to be prepared for that repose, which was chiefly wanting for the recovery of his strength. In a few minutes he fell into a deep sleep, and his attentive hosts, who visited him from time to time, beheld with satisfaction, that his slumber was of that kindly nature which promise speedy renovation to his languid frame. He continued in this state the whole of the day, as it was not till evening that he awoke, wonderfully refreshed in body and mind, and now he bethought himself of putting in practice the project he had conceived in the early part of the morning. He arose, dressed himself in clothes which had been left for that purpose in his bed-room, and fearful lest his new friends should oppose what they might consider his premature departure, he stole softly to the door; and relying on being unperceived in the increasing darkness, cautiously crept along, taking the nearest way to his own home.

Tibby had that evening, twenty times oftener than was necessary, stirred the large coal fire, till it blazed in the chimney, and had trimmed the lamp, which hung over the mantle-piece. She had busied herself all day to get rid of the uneasy thoughts, which oppressed her; and during day-light, assisted by the kind condolence of her neighbours, she had pretty well succeeded; but towards evening, as those visitors departed, the dreary sense of her hopeless, lonely situation, almost overcame her. Among the peasantry of Scotland, the widow is supposed to possess a sacred claim on the good-will and attention of all that surround her. Heaven is deemed peculiarly to interest itself in her cause, consecrating her blessings and avenging her injuries; yet with all this, Tibby, when necessarily left alone, felt as if the world now contained not one being in whose interests she could participate. She looked around her till every object that met her eye seemed to lay its heavy load upon

her heart; she gazed at the glowing embers of the fire, and hardly felt the scalding tears which trickled down her cheeks. She then turned her view to the bed, which but yesterday had exhibited the mournfulest spectacle she had ever beheld; but a nearer object more interested her attention, this was the now vacant arm-chair at the fire-side, where her husband had held his seat by prescriptive right a magisterial throne, which Tibby amidst all her rebellions had never dared to usurp. It was now vacant, and as if to get rid of its for ever hopeless vacancy, with despairing sobs, she threw herself into it. The consciousness that she had been, to say the least, unkind, and unrelenting, tore her heart with agony. "Oh! that he had died in peace with me," cried she. "If I could hae but seen him for a moment. He was ower kind to me, and I didna deserve it—but nae matter," she added, bursting into a flood of tears, "it winna be lang afore we'll lie in ae cauld grave thegither."

At this moment, the sound of some person at the door assailed her ear; but how was she astonished, when she heard the well-known voice of her husband, saying "Dinna be frightened, Tibby, dinna be frightened, my woman." She started from her seat, and looking around, beheld him within the threshold. Tibby trembled with agitation, without the power of uttering the faintest cry of terror. "Dinna be frightened," reiterated the Dominie, "dinna be frightened, my lassie; no for the world's wealth wad I harm ye." Saying these words, he made a motion to approach nearer, when with a confused idea of supernatural danger, Tibby snatched up the large family Bible which lay upon the table. The sacred volume is in Scotland supposed to be the most defensive shield a guiltless heart can be guarded with in the dangerous intercourse with disembodied spirits, and Tibby grasped it firmly in her arms. She fixed her eyes intently on her husband's countenance, and saw it not only beaming with affectionate regard, but that there was not anything the least unworldly in its appearance. She soon felt herself so far recovered, as with faltering voice to mutter something which meant an inquiry as to the object of his awful visit. "Ye ken, Tibby my dear," replied the Dominie, "ye ken that your father, a wee while afore he died, sald a' his kye, and gae you the siller. Now you never wad tell me whar ye had hid it: that is my first business wi' ye, my woman." "There, there," said Tibby, pointing with eagerness to a corner under the farthest bed-post "Fifty-four pounds sixteen shillings." John easily found the money,

and securing it in his pocket, "Now Tibby," said he, "gi' me your hand; will ye gang alang wi me?" "No! no!" replied Tibby, while an icy coldness ran through her veins, "No! not till God's time come." "But I'm alive, woman," returned the Dominie, "alive, and as well as ever I was in my life, I was only in a fit; the doctors got me out of the grave; convince yoursell, I am alive." Ere Tibby was aware, she felt one of her hands grasped in both those of her husband. "Do you not feel," he added, "that I am flesh and blood?" Tibby's terror yielded to the conviction of her senses, as she suffered her husband to impress the warm kiss of affection on her lips. "I am an altered man, Tibby," said he; "I see the folly, the madness of my former conduct."—"and I see the cruelty of mine," interrupted his wife as she hung upon his shoulder. "Let us leave this place for ever," returned the Dominie; "my former worthless associates believe me dead, and we canna hae a better opportunity of parting wi' them; with this little money we'll gang to Edinburgh and begin some line of business, where, if industry, frugality, and temperance, ever meet their reward, we maun thrive. Greet nae mair, Tibby, dry your een; will ye come wi' me?"—"Oh! to the world's end, John," was the ready answer, and they both immediately set about making preparations for their departure. The silver tea-spoons, marked with the husband and wife's initials joined in involving cypher, the gudeman's watch, articles which are hardly ever wanting in the dwellings of the Scottish peasantry, were easily stowed about their persons, and the more ponderous part of their property, Tibby, by her husband's direction, transferred in writing to the care of Messrs. Chronic and M' Gruel. Thus prepared, they set out, the darkness of the night favouring their concealment, and were soon arm in arm, with the most vivid hopes and ardent resolutions, on the great road to Edinburgh.

Early next day, the whole parish of Kilwoody was not a little alarmed by the news of the disappearance of the dry Dominie's widow. It was sagely conjectured, that the apparition of her husband had, in revenge for her usage of him, carried her away bodily to the other world. The whiskey toppers at Saunders Glasse's had some confused remembrance of having seen or heard the phantom on the way to its unhallowed purpose, while not a few of the old women, on being made acquainted with the circumstance, perfectly recollected perceiving an extraordinary blue flame, the preceding evening, hovering around the Dominie's dwelling; some

had even heard what they called an awfu' and indescribable noise, which must have taken place at the moment, when the revengeful spirit flew through the air with his prey. Auld Alice blessed herself that John Bicker could have no quarrel with her, as she had made his grave-clothes of the neatest pattern, and Tam Mowat the wright protested, that wherever the soul of the dry Dominie might then be, he was sure his body was safe betwixt six good pieces of wood as ever were planed.

John Bicker and his wife, on their arrival at Edinburgh, rented a small shop in the Grass-market, and laid out their little money in a stock of linens and hosiery. They wrote an account of their proceedings to Messrs. Chronic and M' Gruel, who feeling a wish to encourage such an industrious couple, furnished them with letters of recommendation to several respectable persons. This increased their business and credit, and every day saw them making gradual advances to comfortable independence. John soon transferred his stock to larger premises in the Lawn-market. The rest of his history may be related in a few words. He at last settled near the Tron Kirk, at the time when the line of houses in the High Street joined that edifice, the South Bridge not being then projected. Here, being fortunate in his speculations as a wholesale merchant, he was chosen one of the baillies of the city. This office in the Scottish metropolis is the same as that of alderman in London, only not so permanent. In this honourable situation he acquitted himself with impartiality and considerable talent, and those who beheld him in the municipal chair, dressed officially in black with the golden chain of dignity, and the medallion of justice depending from his neck, could never have recognized, in the grave magistrate, the drunken, dry Dominie of Kilwoody.

R.

Una Voce Entertainments.

MR. MATHEWS AT HOME, AND MR. PUTNAM'S READINGS.

We cannot participate in the wonder so frequently expressed, that one person should be able to divert an audience during a whole evening. Premising that his physical powers are equal to

the task, and that his talents are something above mediocrity, it appears to us by no means difficult; and the reason is obvious. In the regular drama, the attention is pained, by being compelled to witness the acting of inferior performers. We endure them, because we know they are essential to the developement of the plot; but we sit in restless expectation of being relieved by the entrance of the principal. Who is there that feels an atom of interest in the conversations between "two gentlemen," which so frequently occur in the plays of Shakespeare, and which are necessary, either to impart events that cannot be represented, or connect the order of narration? Applying this observation by contradistinction to the efforts of a single performer, it must be evident that if his talents are at all commensurate with his undertaking, he must be superior to those actors who usually fill such subordinate characters as we have instanced; and that the audience, thus escaping the penance of listening to worse than mediocrity, though they may not be delighted, cannot fail to be amused. But, on the other hand, when the abilities of the exhibitor are of the first order, when he possesses physical and mental qualifications of the highest description, the inference is clear that the gratification he imparts must be of the purest and most unmixed description; and that his success is not merely probable, but certain.

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Mr. Mathews's "Youthful Days."

The above observations will strictly apply to those Exhibitions of Mr. Mathews, with which he has (we believe for five seasons) by the unaided exertions of his own powers astonished and delighted an English audience. It is true, that he alone is ever present before us, that the entertainment is not relieved by a change of persons, and that all we hear is uttered by the same lips; but if there is not a variety of individuals, there is of character, and those who have witnessed his delineations will readily agree with us, that their effect loses nothing by their singleness.

• We have little hesitation in asserting our conviction that, in his "Youthful Days" he has presented us with a superiority in point of interest over all his former efforts. Hitherto we have been amused with the eccentricities of imaginary beings—the mere ideal creations of a lively fancy; but here our pleasure is aug-

mented by the reflection that a great portion at least of his narrative is matter of fact; that we are listening to the description of actual experience, and that the individual to whom the events occurred stands before us. But this is not the only reason why our attention is powerfully arrested. Characters, of whom the aged must have a distinct remembrance, and the young have been taught to regard with wonder, admiration, or respect, are brought before us with such marks of identity, that while the experience of some bears testimony to the fidelity of the portraits, to others they too nearly resemble what their imaginations had conceived, for their correctness to be doubted for a moment. It would be superfluous to enter into detail; nor will our limits allow us. We shall therefore briefly distinguish such points as struck us as most deserving of notice. The *physiognomical* portrait of Wilkes was not merely admirable—it was wonderful. The very features of the sturdy patriot were presented to the eye so faithfully, that no one who has seen even a graphic resemblance of the original, could fail to recognise it. Let any person who possesses an engraving of this extraordinary man take it to the theatre, and make the comparison. The drop of the lip,—the cast of the eye, and the general aspect of the countenance, impressed us with the idea of reanimation rather than mimicry. On his voice and delivery our experience will not enable us to decide; but it possessed too much of the air of reality to leave much doubt of its being genuine. The imitation of Macklin has the same marks of fidelity. The iron-featured, caustic veteran; his hard-favoured physiognomy,—his growl,—the lack-lustre aspect of his visual orbs, as if glazed over by the touch of time, and the general uncouthness of his manners, so true to the traditional description of him, were finely preserved. Old Hurst, with his blunders and cross medley; Dicky Suett, of whom our memory has preserved a recollection so strong as to enable us to pronounce the imitation admirable, and Tate Wilkinson, were inimitable portraitures. But the very finest effort of Mr. Mathews's art—the very acme of his powers, was displayed in his delineation of the celebrated Philpot Curran.—He stood before us, not as an imitation, not as a copy, but as the original itself. It possessed a vitality, in which every shadow of mimicry was lost. It was not Mr. Mathews, but Curran. A friend, who accompanied the writer of this article, and who had been on terms of intimacy with this celebrated man, was strongly affected by

the resemblance, and it is the most honorable testimony to the skill of the performer, that without losing a single portion of Curran's peculiarities, but retaining the Irish accent, and the gesture peculiar to the bar, which can scarcely be considered graceful, he delivered a speech, so impressive, energetic and affecting, so true to nature and feeling, so remote from any thing resembling imitation, that the audience were moved almost to tears. It is the very triumph of art, to imitate a character without making it appear ridiculous, and this triumph Mr. Mathews has successfully achieved.

The Irish Rubber at Whist,—the juvenility both of voice and manner of the orators at Merchant Taylors' School, Mr. Trombone, and the songs, were all excellent; and the construction of the third part was so far judicious, as it presented the relief of a complete dramatic entertainment. Mr. Mark Magnum, a humorous but faithful likeness of those officious pieces of insipidity, the stewards at public dinners, is an admirable sketch. The experience of our feast-going citizens will furnish many duplicates. The French ballet-master; the fat Welchman, grieving that he never gets thinner, and indeed the whole of the characters, with the exception (shall we say?) of the *Line of Beauty*, were chef-d'œuvres.

And now we should be scarcely deemed critics, if we had not discovered something to censure; and we are happy that our penetration has elicited so little. Wit is too scarce a commodity for us to hope to be always entertained with novelty. A few trite jokes have therefore crept in, which though arrayed by the genius of Mr. Mathews with the semblance of originality, do not escape detection. The Irishman and the thirteener is well known; and we have no doubt Mr. Mathews is aware that Mr. Bishop, who was probably head-master at the time he was at Merchant Taylors' School, has converted the story of the Ruffle (which Mr. M. relates of himself) into the following very tolerable epigram:

Once in a barn, the strolling wardrobe's list
Had but one ruffle left for Hamlet's wrist:
Necessity, which has no law, they say,
Could with one ruffle but one arm display.
What's to be done? the hero said, and sigh'd.
Shift hands each scene, a brother buskin cried,
Now in the pocket keep the left from sight,
While o'er your breast you spread the ruffled right.
Now in your robe your naked right repose,
While down your left the dingy cambric flows.
Thus, though half skill'd, as well as half array'd,
You'll make one change, that Garrick never made.

The performance, however, was altogether most excellent. For our own parts, we confess the temptations to be sufficiently numerous to induce us to wish for an opportunity of indulging ourselves with another visit ; and it must have administered no small gratification to the exhibitor, not merely in a pecuniary point of view but as interesting to his private feelings, to witness the effect of his talents in bringing together so repeatedly such a numerous assemblage ; to feel conscious, that he is indebted to no extraneous assistance, no adventitious aid of decoration or scenery, but solely to the efforts of his own powers, for this gratifying result ; and that he reigns in his sole dominion, the mirthful deity of the evening. It was pleasing too to look around, and observe the "wrinkled brow of care," smoothed into the complacency of a smile ; to see the fair faces of female beauty illumined by laughter, which all the sense of decorum in the world cannot at all times suppress, and to find age for a brief moment beguiled into a relish of that merriment which constitutes the chief happiness of youth.

Mr. Putnam's Readings at the Argyll Rooms.

THIS entertainment was rather rhetorical than imitative, and more didactic than amusing. The recitations were readings in the strictest sense of the word, consisting entirely of selections from popular authors, and embracing so much ethical matter, that we are tempted to question the correctness of Mr. Putnam's taste in choosing for public delivery what is so much more adapted for private perusal in the closet. Dean Kirwan on Female Education, Young's Procrastination, and Pope's Essay on Man, are scarcely fit subjects for rhetorical display ; nor do we think Mr. P. shewed that judgment in his selection, which the wide field that lay open before him would have led us to expect. This, however, may be readily remedied in future. But if the selection of preceptive readings was injudicious, the delivery of them was rendered still more objectionable by excessive gesticulation. Surely it is the height of impropriety to accompany a mere ethical quotation with a redundancy of action scarcely requisite in the most energetic piece of declamation : yet this forms Mr. Putnam's principal defect. There is an exuberance about his gesture which rather confuses than illustrates, and imparts pain instead of pleasure. The action should suit the sense,—not the word, and

is more likely to be effective when unstudied, and left to spring from the mere impulse of feeling. It is observable, that the best actors are those who are least prodigal in this respect. A performer who throws about his arms at random, gives us the idea of a man ill at ease, who resorts to this expedient to hide his embarrassment.

If however we are compelled to notice defects, we have great pleasure in bearing testimony to the general excellence, and correct delivery of many of his recitations. The Essay on Female Orators from the Spectator, was read with clear articulation, and much sportiveness and effect, and it lost none of its force by being delivered sitting. The story of Mr. Daw, from Colman, was likewise given with humour, though we think it hardly available for Mr. Putnam's purpose on the score of delicacy. We think some deference should have been paid to an audience which included many ladies of the first rank, and to whom, however lighted up by flashes of humour, it must have imparted some sensation of embarrassment; although we confess the offending parts were softened down with considerable skill.

The Scene from Venice Preserved was too trite. Every school-boy has read it in his Speaker, and there are few persons with whom it is not familiar. The Boiled Pig commenced happily; and had not the reciter attempted to imitate the female voice, might have been pronounced successful. Mary, the Maid of the Inn, was scarcely so effective as we expected, and Mr. P. certainly over-rated the talents of his anonymous friends, when he deemed their effusions fit subjects for recitation. Let us not, however, forget to mention the great satisfaction we derived from his delivery of Repton's Bashful Man, a piece of comic humour deservedly esteemed. Mr. Putnam fully realized our previous conceptions, and administered very highly to the gratification of his audience. On the whole, we have no doubt, should he repeat his entertainment, he will again attract a numerous assemblage; and for our own parts, we heartily wish him every possible success.

Fine Arts.

Representation of the Destruction of Pompeii and Herculaneum.

BY MR. MARTIN.

"What thought can reach,
What language can express, the agonies,
The horrors of that hour! An earth beneath
That threaten'd to devour—an atmosphere
That burn'd and chok'd—ashes that fell for rain—
Thunders that roar'd above—thunders that groan'd
And heav'd below—and solid darkness round,
That like an ocean of black waters whelm'd
And press'd upon the earth!"

POEMS BY EDWIN ATHERSTONE.

We were informed some months since, that Mr. Martin was engaged upon this picture, and knowing the peculiar fitness of his talents for such an undertaking, we were rather impatient for its completion. That the subject is extremely difficult, we admit; but that it is beyond the power of the pencil to describe, as some have affirmed, we deny; and we have no hesitation in adducing this picture, with all its faults, (and we shall point them out as we go on) as a triumphant refutation of such a doctrine. In order that our readers may judge of its suitableness for delineation as well as ourselves, we shall as briefly as possible recal the circumstances of this awful event to their recollection. It appears then, that the destruction of the cities of Herculaneum, Pompeii and Stabia, took place, according to Pliny the Younger, who was an eye-witness of that catastrophe, August the 24th, in the second year of the reign of the Emperor Titus, or A. D. 79. Many and frequent shocks of earthquake had been felt for some days prior to this dreadful eruption; but as these were phenomena by no means uncommon in Campania, extraordinary alarm was not felt from that circumstance, until about one o'clock in the afternoon of the 24th of August, when a vast and singular cloud was seen to elevate itself in the atmosphere; from what mountain it proceeded was not readily discernible at Misenum, (a distance of about fifteen miles) where Pliny the Elder held the command of the Roman fleet. This cloud continued arising in an uniform column of smoke, which varied in brightness, and was dark and spotted, as it was more or less impregnated with earth and cinders. Having attained

an immense elevation, expanding itself, it spread out horizontally, in form like the branches of a pine, and precipitated the burning materials, hot cinders, pumice stones, with black and broken pieces of burning rock, with which it was charged, upon the many and beautiful, but ill fated towns, which stood thick upon this delightful coast—blotting them out of the map of existence.

Now bearing in mind all the terrific concomitants of this dreadful eruption—the tremblings of the earth—the throes of the maddened billows—the fire and flame and smoke above, around—the thunders and the lightnings—the wild rage of frightened animals—the shrieks of women—and the despair of men, we pronounce it a subject, the representation of which is entirely within the range of the pictorial art. It must be admitted that the passions in individual instances at least, have been faithfully reflected upon the canvas even in their most intense expression: if then passion, has been represented with success in an individual, so it may in a multitude of individuals. The same may be said of the elements, that their wildest assumptions (separately at least,) have been faithfully pourtrayed, and if separately, why not in conjunction? The difficulty is augmented, but surely is not insuperable. Those then who insinuate that Mr. Martin has failed in this production, and attribute it to the incompetency of the graphic art to grasp the subject, have, to say the least, inconsiderately come to such conclusion, and the apology they have charitably provided for the artist, inasmuch as it impeaches his judgment in the selection of his subject, is an unguent calculated rather to increase than diminish the smart they have occasioned. Everything connected with the event is tangible to the graphic touch; and for our parts, so earthy are we, that we would rather witness a representation somewhat short of perfection of this sublime fact, than the finest allegorical fancy that was ever embodied by Rubens himself, with Mr. Ward's huge Waterloo puzzle into the bargain. But we will straight to the picture.

Towns and cities, with their long streets and magnificent buildings, are thought no more of by this gentleman, than barns and hovels are by other artists; accordingly we have no fewer than five of them with other appurtenances to boot, introduced into this picture. In the foreground is Stabia; beyond, is the fine bay of Naples, on the farther side of which, on the right of the picture, is Pompeii con-

nected with Stabia by the Stabian way. More towards the centre,
 but receding from the spectator, is Oplontis, on the left of Oplontis,
 but nearer to the spectator is Retina, and behind Retina, but yet
 more to the left, is Herculaneum, and then on the right and centre
 the eye is bounded by huge Vesuvius. Such is the disposition of
 the picture, which is according to the best authorities upon the
 subject, and followed by the artist with the precision of a geogra-
 pher. But Mr. Martin's industry, research, and love of truth,
 enable him to do more; not only are the towns and cities repre-
 sented in their relative situations and magnitudes, but we find the
 public edifices maintain their relations in these respects also, so that
 we are indebted to Mr. Martin for much edification as well as
 delight. A topographical lecture upon these places would not be so
 serviceable; for instruction, addressed to the ear, is not so clearly
 comprehended or easily retained as that addressed to our vision. On
 the summit of Vesuvius, a pillar of fire is elevating itself, and the
 immense volumes of smoke and ashes which hang incumbent over
 the devoted cities, are so arranged, that at a distance the appearance
 would be that of a huge pine tree, spreading its branches, while to
 those nearer, their fantastic disposition forms a black and arched
 roof of a mighty vault, the interior of which is furnished with trees,
 houses, temples, and cities of living flame:—the whole scene pre-
 senting a palace fit for the God of fire. The strong light in the
 centre, which is gradually toned down even to blackness towards
 the boundaries of the picture, finely assists the perspective, and
 deserves great praise. The figures introduced into this picture, as
 well as most others by the same gentleman, are innumerable, but he
 has not turned them to that account he might have done: we should
 like to have seen the most prominent so knotted as for each little
 club of sufferers to have told some tale of woe, and the more do-
 mestic the character of the suffering, the more impressive its repre-
 sentation.

In what part of the Iliad or the Odyssey are we more, or so much
 affected as in the description of these domestic incidents? Mr.
 Martin will perceive the force of our observations, if he will
 recal the feelings that were excited in his bosom by the description
 of the Trojan queen at witnessing the imminent danger of her son
 Hector. The parting of that son from the partner of his heart and
 the sharer of his bed; the faithful dog's recognition, after twenty

years' absence, of his kind master Ulysses; the tender discovery of this prince to his venerable parent; or, if we turn to the *Aeneid*, the setting out of the hero of this poem for another country with his decrepid father on his shoulders, his little son in his hand, and his wife following. Each of these incidents is a picture in itself, and the finest composition of the pencil would be an assemblage of such groups, equally prominent in significance though not in situation and finish. Every thing introduced must have a meaning, and that meaning must tend to the elucidation of the tale to be told. Of this description is the Roman in Mr. Martin's painting, who has been struck dead, and whose wife lies senseless across his bosom. The conception of the centurions warding off with their shields the stones and ignited matter which are descending upon their families is extremely excellent. The introduction of Pliny the Elder, and his friend Pomponianus and family, is judicious; but as they are the most distinguished characters in the story, we submit that they should have been equally prominent in the scene. We must remark, that in this group the fainting female is extremely feebly drawn, and she has (whether from design or not it is difficult to say) a peculiar rotundity, which, however interesting in real life, has here a ludicrous effect. And let us be permitted to ask, why the prows of the Roman fleet are all in one direction? We apprehend the violent flux and reflux of the waters, occasioned by the quakings of the earth, and the general agitation of the elements, would lose all appearance of order.

It is difficult to say whether the animate or inanimate portion of Mr. Martin's productions is the most imposing, but it is easy to decide which he is most successful in portraying. If the gentleman aspired only to be a mere landscape painter, and introduced a solitary figure, or even two, to impart a small degree of animation to a quiet scene, we should not be so rigid in our exactions. But when we find that the number of his agents confers originality and character—when, imperfect as they are, they give interest and impart life to his subject,—when they become so importantly imposing as to elevate landscape painting into historical dignity, and when all this is intended by the artist,—then it becomes the critic's duty to apply the test, and in doing so, we find Mr. Martin's incorrect in drawing, and deficient in expression. We earnestly then recommend this gentleman to resume his studies of the human figure

—it is absolutely necessary to the department of painting he has adopted. He undertakes to tell a story, and the most effectual way to do this, is by portraying faithfully the operations of passion on the frames and faces of the actors brought into the scene. Is it the Fall of Babylon, or the Destruction of Pompeii and Herculaneum? No matter; be the subject what it may, each man's countenance should be as expressive as the "title page to a tragic volume." The most mighty convulsions of nature are nothing but as they affect man: a fiery comet, whose flashing corruscations are ten thousand times larger and fiercer than this eruption, passes over our head, unheeded, while this convulsion is remembered and will be to the end of time. Why is this? Because man is not within the destructive influence of the one, while he was exposed to all the horrors of the other. Then depict the consciousness of the danger of that influence upon his countenance and frame: in them let us see reflected the surrounding ruin; the heaving billow overwhelming the labouring bark, the throbbing earth toppling town the humble cot and the majestic temple, Nature's fever consuming her own green bosom, "and all the horror of the scene." Effect this, and what is now excellent, will then be perfect.

As the greater part of his agents are too remote and minute for a defined display of passion, these remarks are only intended to apply to those figures which occupy the foreground. The colouring of this picture has given rise to much and various observation; we however think it good; all natural light being excluded by immense volumes of black smoke and ashes, every object was concealed in darkness, and if visible at all, must be rendered so by the artificial light of fire, they therefore necessarily assume the colour of this element, which gives them visible existence, and can assume no other.

The peculiarities of this gentleman's style are all to be found in this picture. The shore and bay of Naples is represented 348 feet below Stabia, which forms, as we have before observed, the foreground: here we have the effect of depth. In the back is Vesuvius, 4000 feet above the level of the sea: here we have the effect of height. The torrent of flame and burning matter issuing from the top scatters light around; while the clouds of thick vapour and ashes throw over a great part of the scene the blackness of darkness. Thus have we the effect of brilliant light and profound darkness. The magnitude of the cities and other objects gives us an idea of vast-

ness, while the number of houses, public edifices, ships, and human beings, vanishing into specks, excite in us the feelings occasioned by multitude and minuteness. Height, depth, refulgent light, profound darkness, vastness, multitude, and minuteness, separately the occasion of sublime feelings, are overwhelming when united with skill in a subject in its nature sublime. Mr. Martin does this in so masterly a manner, as to be justly entitled to the proud distinction of being the most poetic and sublime painter of his time, and if he will but bring his execution to rival his conception, we may add,—of any time.

C.

Exhibition of Drawings, Soho Square.

THIS Exhibition is of a very pleasing and useful character. It is pleasing to the amateur and admirer, on account of its possessing some most delightful and highly finished specimens of art;—it is useful to the student, as it presents a connected view of the progress of Drawing in this country, from the time of Paul Sandby to the present day; also the method adopted by some of the greatest masters of embodying their conceptions from the rudest sketch, to the most elaborate detail.

The principal picture is an admirable copy in oil of Annibal Carracci's "Three Maries," now in the possession of the Earl of Carlisle. We take the following description of the original from the Catalogue of Pictures at Castle Howard, Yorkshire.

"If ever there was a picture that united all the excellencies of painting, this seems to be that wonderful effort of art. The drawing, colouring, and composition cannot be surpassed; and the deep tragedy, which it exhibits, to use the words of a great author, Dr. Johnson, 'storms the human heart.' The expression of grief of Mary Magdalen is carried to the extremest point of agonizing woe, and most astonishing is it, that such fixed despair, and sense of excruciating misery, should be described on the human countenance without verging caricature or distortion. The fainting figure of the mother of Jesus is a masterly contrast to the dead body of the Son; and the terror expressed by the elder Mary at viewing her daughter apparently lifeless, gives room to describe distress of a more varied kind than that of the Mary Magdalen. The size of the canvas on which the whole of the subject can be embraced at once, much

enhances the value of this picture, as it prevents a painful operation of the mind, which the spectator is called upon to exert, in order to unite the extended parts of a larger subject. Many stories are recorded of the estimated value of this extraordinary work; such as the Court of Spain having offered to cover its surface with louis-d'ors, which would amount, by the trial to 8000. An offer within these last twenty years from England is said to have extended to more than that sum. While in the possession of the Duke of Orleans, and before the troubles commenced in France, it was not probable that any offer (with the hope of acceptance) could have been made. By the most awful and unexpected of all events, the French Revolution, and in the wreck of all princely grandeur and individual property, it found its way into England, and into the hands of the owner of this house, where, as long as it remains, may it not only be an object of delight and admiration, but a memorial of the instability of all worldly possessions."

We have only room briefly to observe that Mr. Jackson has caught the different shades of intense grief, originating in the same source, only varied by the age, the character, and the relative situation of each of the Maries to the Redeemer, with surprising fidelity. The longer we dwell upon it, the more satisfaction does it impart. Perhaps we shall appear a little hypercritical in venturing to call Mr. J. to a revision of the fingers. There is a squareness about the ends of them, incompatible with nature or grace, and we suspect with the original.

On parting from this subject, our attention was drawn by some very beautiful delineations of English scenery, by J. M. W. Turner, R. A. The most prominent of which is a view of Hastings from the sea. The swelling, dancing, buoyant billows are exquisitely managed; and the facility with which the effect appears to be accomplished, surprises as much as the effect itself. This Drawing is now being engraved in the line manner, on a large scale by W. B. Cooke, for the splendid work of Views at Hastings and its vicinity, which is to be completed in two parts, with or without letter-press—one part is already published. We shall take the liberty of pointing out to our readers another by the same master. The Eruption of Vesuvius, a most excellent little drawing. There are several sketches of ladies in black lead by the hand of Sir Thomas Lawrence, in which delicacy, force, and elevation (Sir Thomas's excellencies) are

peculiarly observable: No. 3, portrait of a lady, was formed in the third heavens of grace and intellectuality. It is impossible not to be struck with the similarity in the style of sketching of the president and the late Mr. Harlow. We do not think there is a better picture in the whole collection than the Interior of the Chapter House, Christ Church, Oxford, by F. Mackenzie; the Gothic window, the sun beams piercing through the chequered casement and capriciously playing upon the walls and table; the sober colouring of the rest of the room, each heightening by contrast the effect of the other, are truth itself. Mr. Martin has a series of drawings illustrative of Collins's powerful Ode on the Passions: we shall merely observe that this gentleman has done much greater things than these. Stephanoff has several drawings which are executed with his usual success, neatness and spirit are their essence. Sir John Leicester's Gallery of pictures, and the Vicar of Wakefield seeking his Daughter at the Race Course, are fine instances to illustrate our remarks.

There is a very splendid collection of Enamels by Mr. Charles Muss, the principal of which is the Holy Family, from Parmegiano. This is the largest enamel ever executed. Its richness, depth, precision, and sharpness, will justify us in pronouncing it a brilliant work of art. The tone of the colouring however is deeper than the original. It would be injustice to omit noticing two or three firm and bold miniatures from the pencils of Robertson and Haughton. Though their manner of working is very opposite, they both succeed in attaining the depth and richness of oil. Henning, too, has his excellent casts in bas-relief of the battle of the Centaurs and Lapithæ, from the Phrygian marbles. When we consider that the original figures are about 24 inches, and these about two, we are surprised at the correctness with which he has transferred the spirit and symmetry of the originals.

We would observe of the sketches, to which are affixed many illustrious names among the ancients, that some have the cygnet of the masters whose names they bear; but we think we could give good reasons for our opinion that a patronimick has been conferred on others to which they are not entitled.

Notices of the Exhibition of Mr. West's Pictures,—the Society of Painters in Water Colour, &c. will appear in our next Number.

Sonnet.

TO THE MOON.

I LOVE to gaze upon thy smiling face,
 Bright guardian of the night's lone solitude ;
 For at that time, mild feelings will intrude
 Their pensive softness; memory will retrace
 Full gladly then, each blissful, sunny spot
 Within the waste of time, where flowers grew,
 Too sweet their fragrance, to be yet forgot,
 Deep felt their early fading— tho' so few.
 Oh ! there's a charm that wreathes about the heart,
 A lulling influence in thy placid beam,
 When thou art watching nature's quiet dream,
 Like woman's love, that comes but to depart.
 Some few bright nights, thy fickle smile will fade,
 And those who lov'd thee most—be most betray'd.

THEODORE.



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